



What is Bonism? Bonismⁱ is a religion with very simple commandments:

1. Learn what harm is.
2. Vow to stop harm.
3. Prepare to stop harm.
4. Stop harm.

1. Learn what harm is.

Good and bad things are simple too. Here is a list of them (**The Bonist Morals**):

Badness 1: The presence or increase of pain.

Badness 2: A risk of pain.

Badness 3: The loss of pleasure.

Badness 4: The loss of a chance of pleasure.

Badness 5: The subversion of goodness or promotion of badness.

Badness 6: Any risk of a subversion of goodness or promotion of badness.

Goodness 1: The elimination or reduction of pain.

Goodness 2: Any chance of the elimination or reduction of pain.

Goodness 3: An experience of pleasure.

Goodness 4: A chance of pleasure.

Goodness 5: The subversion of badness or promotion of goodness.

Goodness 6: Any chance of the subversion of badness or promotion of goodness.

In each case, the cause of any of the above is also bad or good, respectively. *Pain* refers to any type of pain, in any degree, whether physical or psychological. And this goodness and badness is objective, not only subjective.

Harm occurs when any consciousness is forced to experience badness, or prevented from experiencing goodness, without moral justification.

What is meant by ‘any consciousness’?

Consciousness refers to any being capable of feeling anything. This includes every human being, and probably every animal as well.

What is meant by ‘moral justification’?

Moral justification refers to harm-reduction. Defending yourself against an attacker might cause him pain, yet your defense is not a harm to him since he was trying to harm you first. In a sense, he was not *forced* to experience the pain of your self-defense, since he chose to violate morality by attempting to harm you. This is only valid towards the minimum force necessary to stop the attack. Using too much force against an attacker is itself a harm.

i. Pronunciation: Bahn-ihzm, IPA /bɒnɪ.zəm/

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2. Vow to stop harm.

Sincerely adopting **The Bonist Creed** is the means by which anyone can vow to stop harm. It is beneficial to place your hand over your heart as you say it aloud:

I embrace all goodness and oppose all badness. I repent of my every wrong as I vow to live morally: never to harm, but to make amends for harm, to prevent harm, and to stop harm. And to benefit the cosmos in all ways that I can: by promoting the good through justice, help, and the example of my life. I devote all my energies henceforth toward being a general balm to this and all worlds.

Making this vow in full conviction, and with understanding, is how a **Bonist** is created.

- What is meant by 'Justice'? *Justice* refers to righting wrongs, and preventing wrongs.

There is one sacrament to the Bonist religion: **The Sacrament of Helping**. Every time you help another consciousness—whether human or not—you are performing this sacrament.

3. Prepare to stop harm.

Preparing to stop harm means that a Bonist should educate and train themselves so that they can be a balm to the world. There are seven categories in which to do this, all of which should be equally pursued by a Bonist:

A. Health: You should seek the best science-based and ethical nutrition for yourself, plus medical training so you can help yourself and others with first aid assistance, preferably to a high level. You should also seek similar skills and knowledge for helping sick and injured non-human animals. You should also study basic counseling techniques (such as cognitive behavioral therapy) so you can help both yourself and others with psychological challenges. And also get yourself physically fit to the extent possible under your circumstances.

B. Security: You should learn personal security principles (such as situational awareness) plus your choice of self-defense training so that you can defend yourself and other innocents from danger. Also study other forms of personal protection, like data security.

C. Communication: You should study logic, argumentation, and cognitive biases, and you should improve your grammar and vocabulary to better represent yourself and your views. Beauty is both a form of goodness and a form of communication. The highest form of beauty is kindness.

D. Knowledge: You should study world history, world philosophy, and world religion, in order to give context to current events, and to understand the journey of life on earth and the human condition, and to empathize with those you share time with.

E. Survival: You should train in disaster preparation, camping, gardening, foraging, and all manner of skills needed during emergency situations, whether short-term or long-term. You should develop a personal survival plan, and gather necessary supplies for emergencies. In normal times, be a good steward of your material resources. Build healthy relationships.

F. Morality: You should memorize the Bonist Creed, the Bonist Morals, and the Primal Laws, and think through their application to many types of acts and situations. You should become mindful of their application to your daily life. You should share Bonism with others. The meaning of life is to be moral.

G. Devotion: Helping others is the Bonist form of worship, so learn how to help others in Bonist ways, and prepare to do so. Practice mindfulness and meditation, and cultivate gratitude to develop your efficient happiness. Learn to vaporize your wants and your ego, and to respond with understanding and patience in any situation.

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4. Stop Harm.

Put all of the above into practice, so that you can be a **general balm to the world**. This is done with the **Three Primal Laws** in mind:

The Primal Right: No consciousness can be rightfully prevented from opposing badness and promoting goodness.

The Primal Authority: Every consciousness can be rightfully prevented from promoting badness and subverting goodness.

The Primal Duty: A consciousness ought to promote goodness and subvert badness, for others as well as itself.

Bonist Life

Being a Bonist therefore requires, among other things:

- ▶ **Veganism:** Doing no harm to animals.
- ▶ **Anti-natalism:** Preventing harm to the unborn by not bringing them into existence.
- ▶ **Kindness:** A repudiation of selfishness, in favor of being thoughtful, helpful, and courteous.
- ▶ **Understanding:** Using empathy to better understand the situations of other conscious beings.
- ▶ **Compassion:** This means advocating for issues like healthcare for all, a fair economic system, a fair society, and real justice. And for the option of mercy (euthanasia) for those who wish it, or who are unable to give consent yet are subject to extreme suffering.

FAQ

Q. Is this really a religion? Does this religion require belief in God or the supernatural?

A. Yes, Bonism is a real religion. Being a Bonist does not require, nor does it necessarily forbid, belief in the supernatural. But all of the beliefs and actions of a Bonist should be in harmony with the Bonist Creed, the Bonist Morals, and the Primal Laws.

Q. Why the term *Bonism*?

A. *Bon* means 'good'. A Bonist strives to be good, and to increase the goodness in the world.

Q. Who are the clergy of this religion? How does someone become a Bonist minister?

A. Every Bonist is fully empowered as a Bonist minister. Every Bonist is fully commissioned and ordained to live their Bonist ministry to the fullest extent, and serve in the role of clergy if that role is suited to their Bonist efforts and personal abilities.

Q. Who is the central authority of Bonism? What is the leadership structure and by-laws? Who are the founders?

A. There is no central authority or leadership structure in Bonism. There is no Bonist hierarchy. Bonism has been created anonymously, and is completely in the public domain everywhere. It belongs to every Bonist equally and fully, forever.

Q. Can I create my own Bonist church, Bonist association, or other kind of Bonist group or fellowship?

A. Yes, absolutely. Though one must be careful to ensure that any such organization is truly Bonist, and reflects well on Bonism, and even upon Bonists not in the organization.

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Q. Where do I register as a Bonist, join as an official member, etc.?

A. There is no central Bonist organization, and no way to register or fill out a membership form (unless it is in some Bonist group that someone else has created). Simply by sincerely saying and believing the Bonist Creed, and doing your best to live as a Bonist by the Creed, Bonist Morals, and Primal Laws, you are officially a Bonist as fully as it is possible to be.

Q. What is the scripture or holy book of this religion?

A. The only vital sacred texts are the Bonist Creed, the Bonist Morals, and the Primal Laws. Anything else that is considered Bonist scripture must be supportive of these, and never in opposition to them.

Q. Is Bonism a pacifist religion?

A. Yes. A Bonist opposes all violence, apart from morally-justified personal self-defense, or defense of an innocent victim. Even in those cases, Bonism deeply opposes on moral grounds all organized violence, war, and militarism. This is because Bonists oppose harm, and must carefully judge self-defense situations personally, through the lens of Bonist morality, without being given orders.

Q. How can I differentiate a real Bonist from a false one?

A. A real Bonist, in addition to sincerely believing and living by the Bonist Creed, the Bonist Morals, and Primal Laws, is kind, helpful, and motivated by empathy and love. They do not take joy in suffering, nor are they consumed by personal material gain. One should beware psychopaths and similar wolves in sheep's clothing.

Symbols of Bonism

The Bon is a stylized Greek letter *phi* which is the official symbol of Bonism, seen at the top of the first page of this document.

It may be approximated in Unicode by Φ (U+03A6), at least until a proper Bon Unicode symbol is introduced.

The official color of Bonism is **Bonist Green**, specifically RGB 0, 128, 52, which is (HEX #008034). It is supported by **Bonist Gold**, which is RGB 255, 219, 127 (HEX #FFDB7F).

Further Reading

The following will assist a Bonist's journey:

The Implications of Consciousness, by Anonymous (2021). An examination of morality from first principles—including treatment of additional subjects like economics, birth, life, death, and happiness. A non-profit public domain work, its detailed moral analysis forms the theoretical foundation of Bonism.

Full text: www.archive.org/details/the_implications_of_consciousness

Audio: www.archive.org/details/the_implications_of_consciousness_audio

Video: www.archive.org/details/the-implications-of-consciousness_film

PDF and audio versions of this Bonism paper, in various languages, are available at www.bonism.org, and:

Full text: www.archive.org/details/bonism

Audio: www.archive.org/details/bonism_audio

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